

Quarter 1 Lesson 1
Sixth Grade
Jesus Is Coming

**Stories included: A. Prophecies about Jesus B. Angel Visits Zacharias
C. Angel Appears to Mary D. Mary Visits Elizabeth and The Birth of John**

Memory Verse: "For with God nothing will be impossible."

Luke 1: 37

Introduction

During the sixth grade year of Bible school, you will be studying almost every book of the New Testament. The first two quarters will be spent in a study of the life of Jesus. The third quarter will address the beginning of the church as found in Acts. Finally, the last quarter will focus on the epistles. Whew! That is a lot of ground to cover! But we can do it!

This quarter of studies is centered on the life of Jesus beginning with events which surrounded His birth and continuing through His ministry. Because this series is often structured with multiple stories within one lesson, you may choose to cover the material in one sitting or break it up into more than one day. Each story within the lesson will be listed separately on our church web site. We begin our study with the prophecies concerning Jesus, the Messiah:

A. Prophecies about Jesus

The Old Testament begins with the story of Creation and carries us to the promise God made to Abraham proclaiming that the Messiah would come through his family. From there it focuses on the history of a nation, Israel. The New Testament tells about the fulfillment God's promise.

The Bible contains over 300 prophecies about Jesus. A prophecy is a prediction about the future. These prophecies about our Savior were written hundreds of years before the events even happened. They give us details about Jesus' birth, His life, His death, and His resurrection. We can see that God had everything planned well in advance! Let's take a look at just a few of these prophecies about our Lord:

As early as 1400 B.C., a prophecy in Genesis says that all nations were to be blessed through Abraham. (Gen. 18:17-18; 12:3; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14)

Matthew 1 traces the lineage (family tree) of Jesus back to Abraham. Luke 3 traces the lineage of Jesus back to Adam.



He will be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Gen. 17:7,19; 21:12; 26:2-4; Num. 24:17,19)



A prophecy given between 701-681 B.C. proclaims that the Messiah will be born of a virgin. (Is. 7:14)

A prophecy given around 626-586 B.C. tells us that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David. (Is. 9:7; Jer. 23:5)

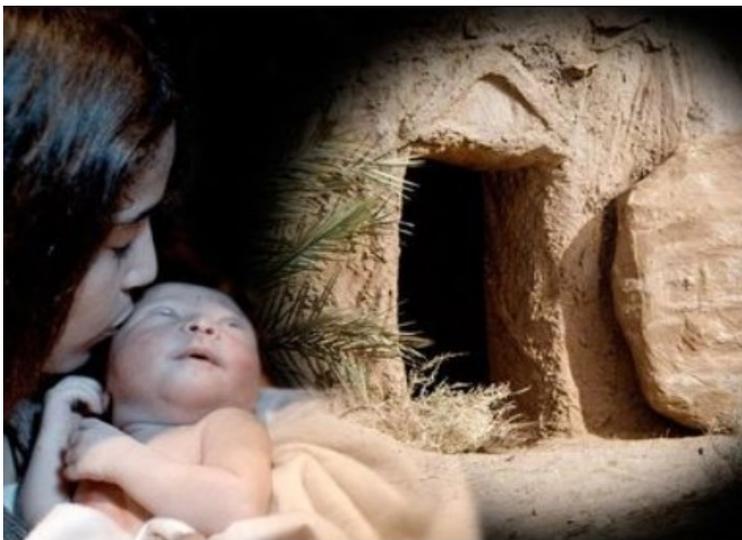


A prophecy given between 750-686 B.C. foretold that He would be born in Bethlem in Judea. (Micah 5:2)



A prophecy given around 1000 B.C. told that kings would bring gifts and bow down before Him. (Ps. 72:10-11)

A prophecy given between 626-586 B.C. said that there would be a massacre of the children. (Jer. 31:15)



A prophecy given between 750-686 B.C. says that He will be eternal. (Micah 5:4)

In addition, Isaiah 52 and 53 calls Jesus a "servant" and a "Man of Sorrows." Isaiah says He would be "despised and rejected by men; wounded for our transgressions;" bruised for our iniquities (sins); oppressed and afflicted; and that He would be led "as a lamb to the slaughter." Again, these are just a very few of the prophecies mentioned in the Bible about Jesus.

As we continue our study about the birth and life of Jesus, you will see how these prophecies were fulfilled. You will see how the details of God's perfect plan to save us from our sins unfolded through His own timeline. Let's continue now with the story of an angel appearing to Zacharias and see how it relates to the birth of Jesus.

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Quarter 1 Lesson 1
B. An Angel Visits Zacharias
Luke 1: 5-25



*“⁵ There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain **priest named Zacharias...***

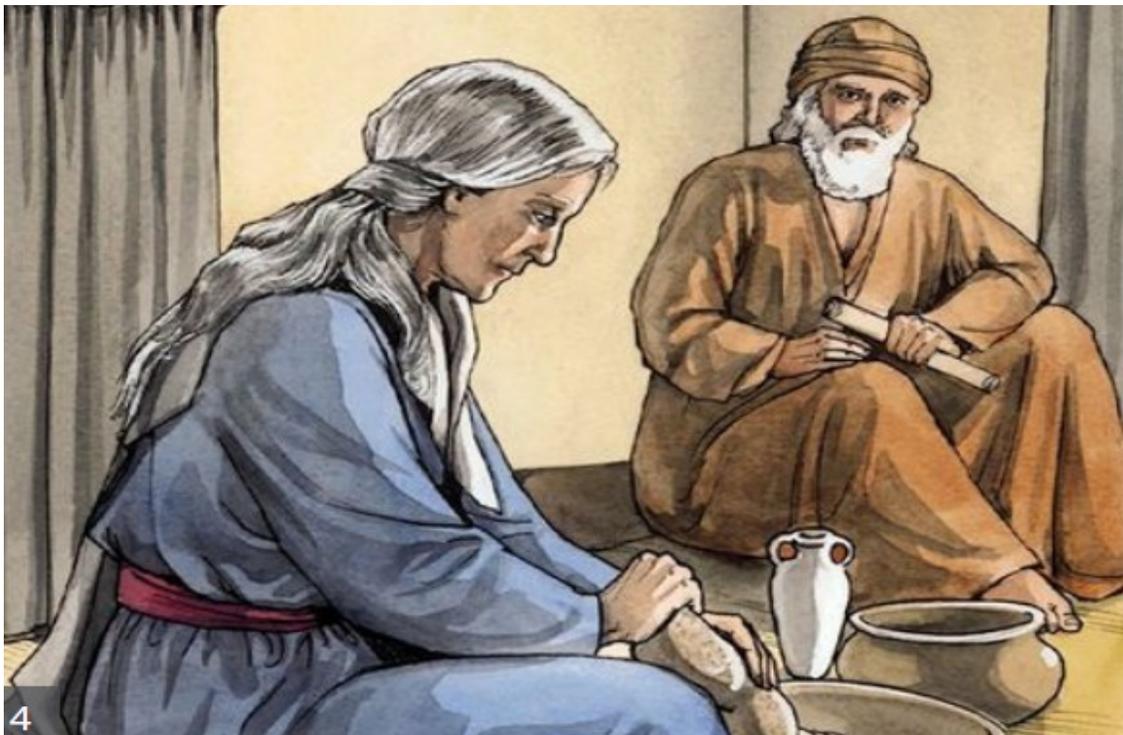
(Herod, also known as Herod the Great, ruled Judea for the Roman government. He was an evil man!)



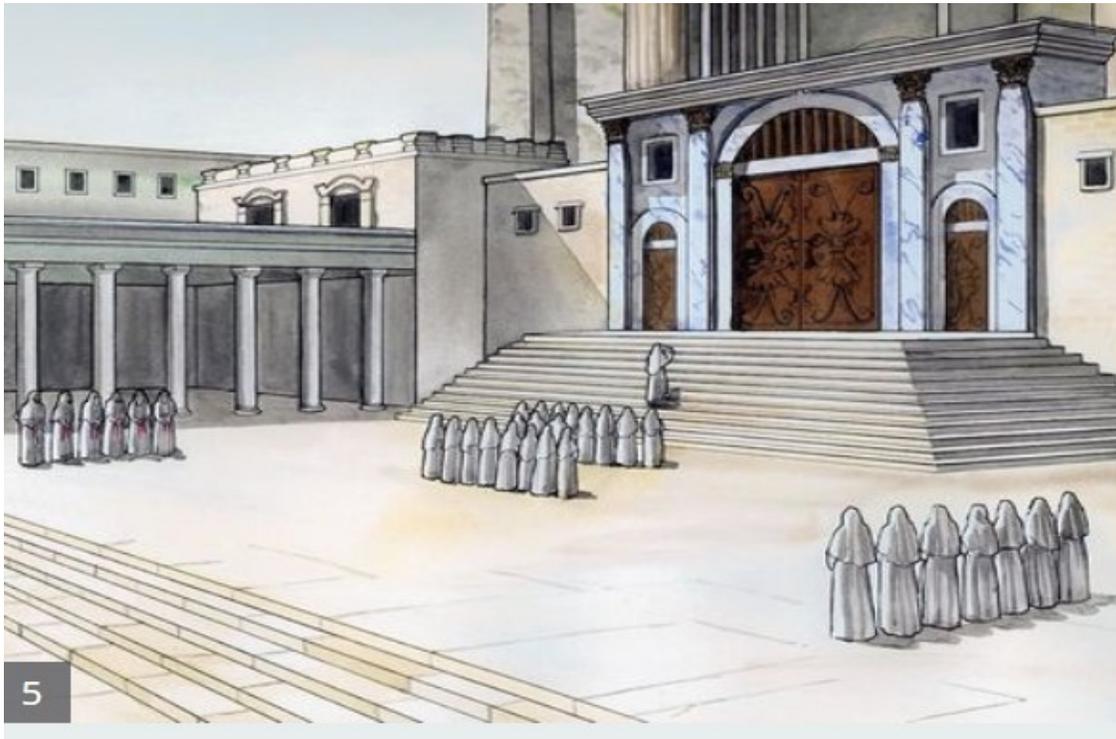
*...His wife was of the daughter of Aaron, and her name was **Elizabeth.***
(She was a descendant of Aaron and of the priestly tribe.)



⁶ And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

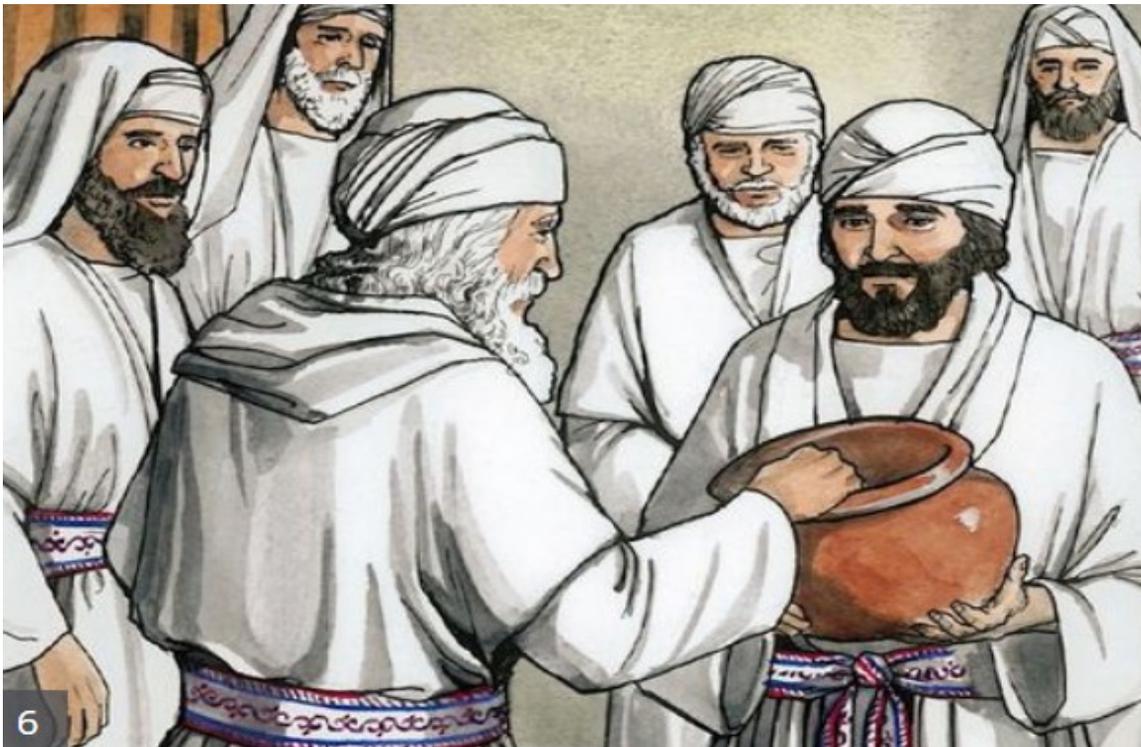


⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.



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⁸ So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division...



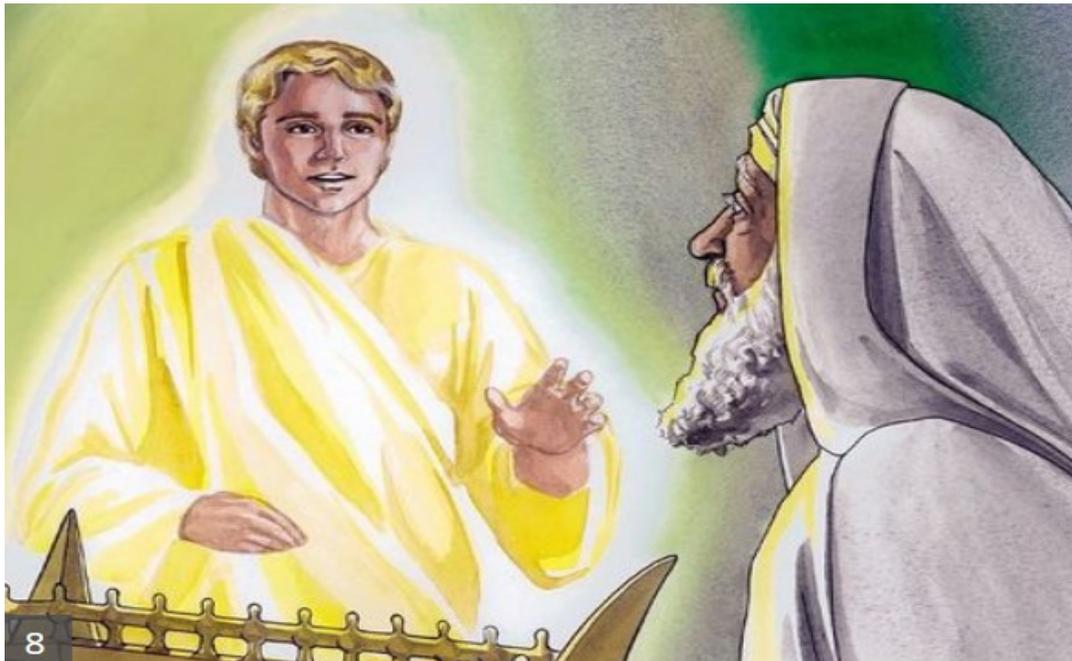
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⁹ ...according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

(The priests took turns serving in the temple. On this particular day it was the duty of Zacharias to burn incense, which was the most honorable service.)



10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.



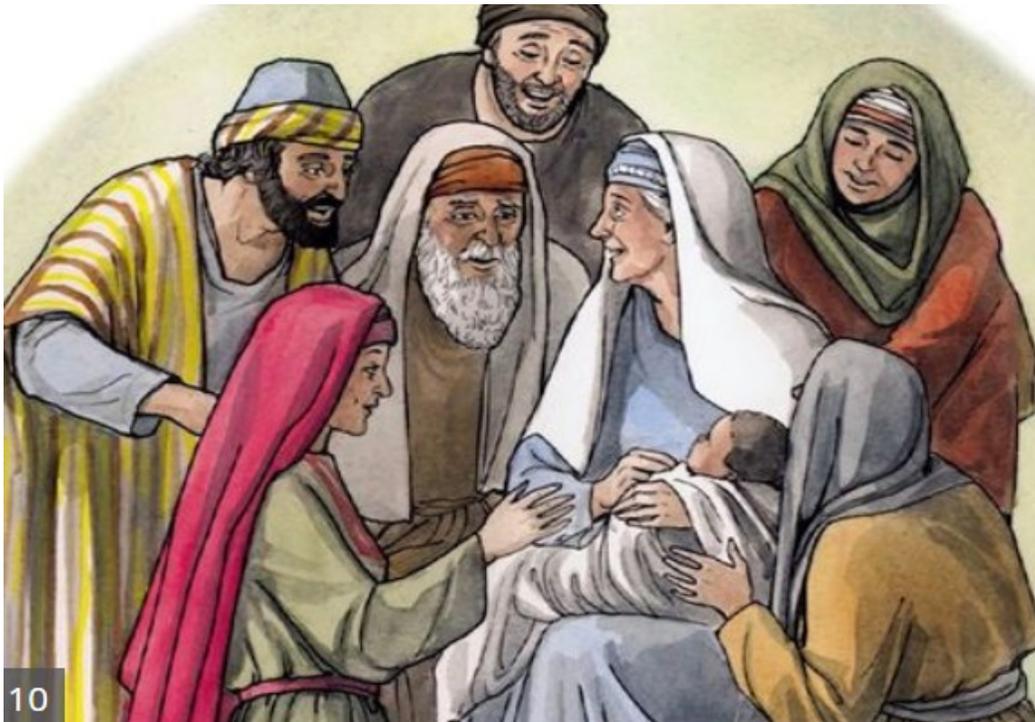
*11 Then **an angel of the Lord** appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.*

(Can you imagine how Zacharias must have felt? Out of nowhere, an angel appears! I think I would have been afraid, too!)



9

*13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for **your prayer is heard**;*



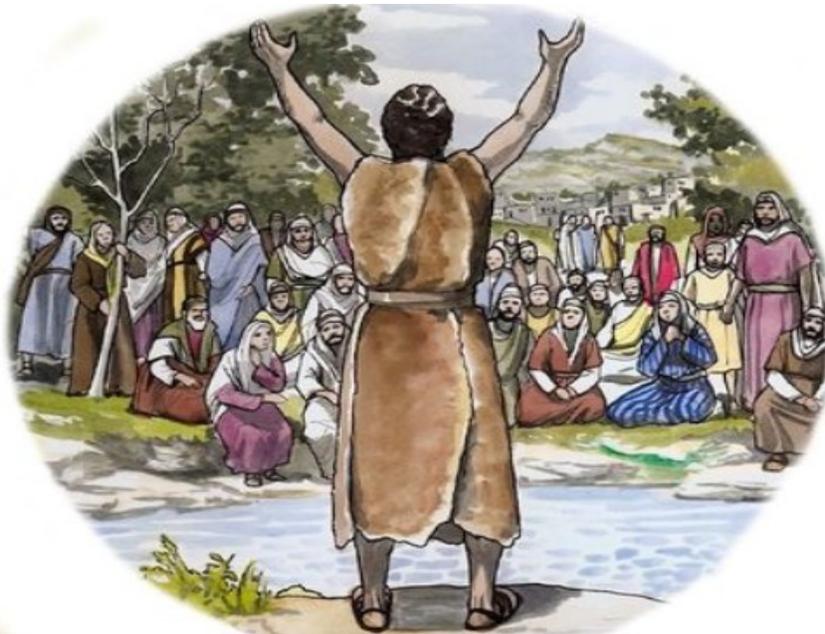
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*and your wife **Elizabeth will bear you a son**, and you shall call his name **John**.
14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.*



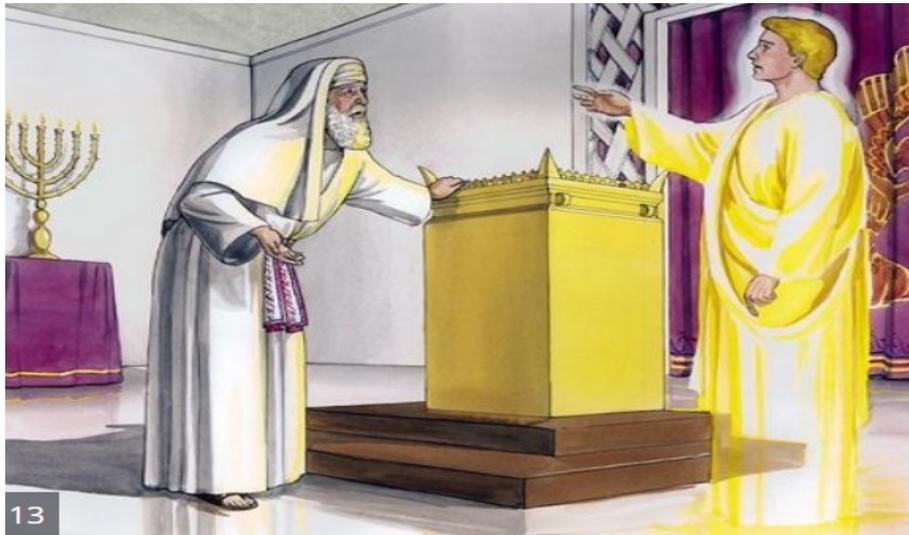
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15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.



12

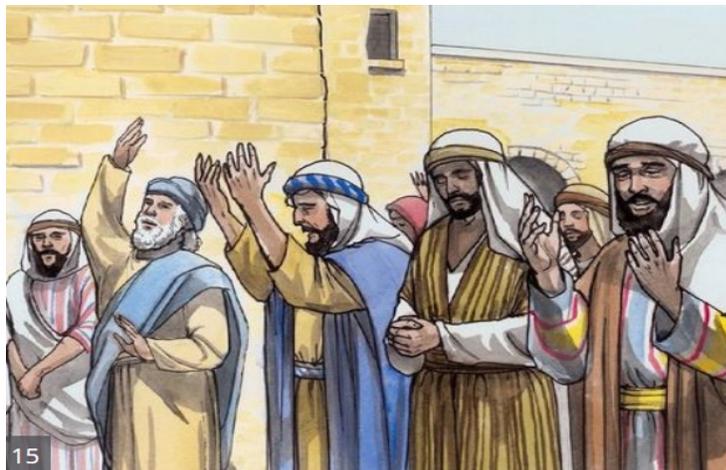
16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. (This is going to be one very special baby! He will grow up to be great in God's sight. He is the one who will prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus.)



18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is well advanced in years."

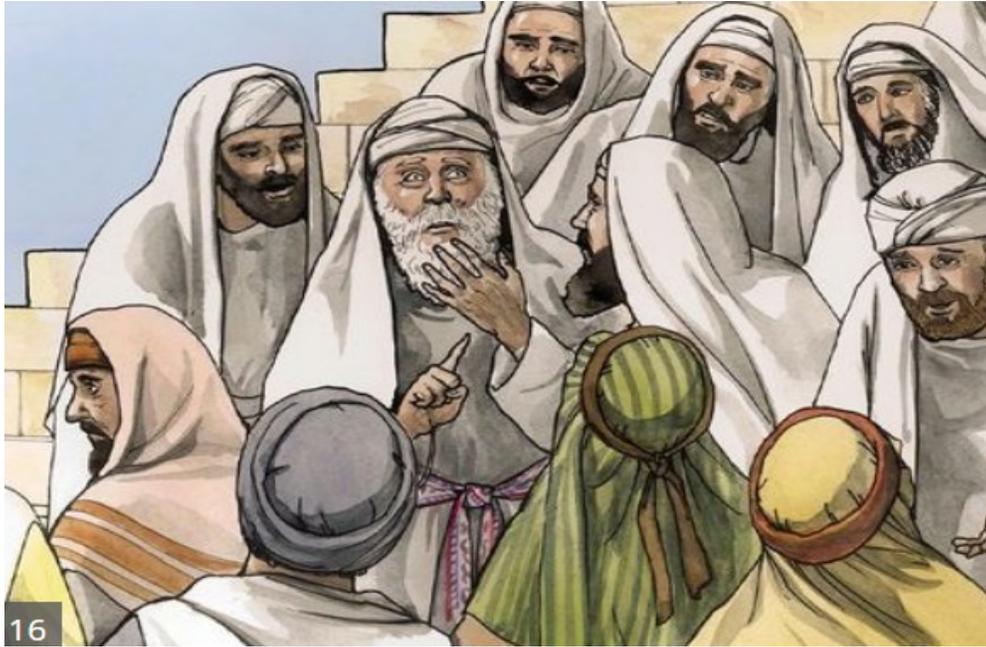
(Zacharias thinks this can't happen. He and his wife are way too old to have children. Zacharias is about to learn a lesson the hard way!)

*19 And the angel answered and said to him, "**I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. 20 But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.**"*



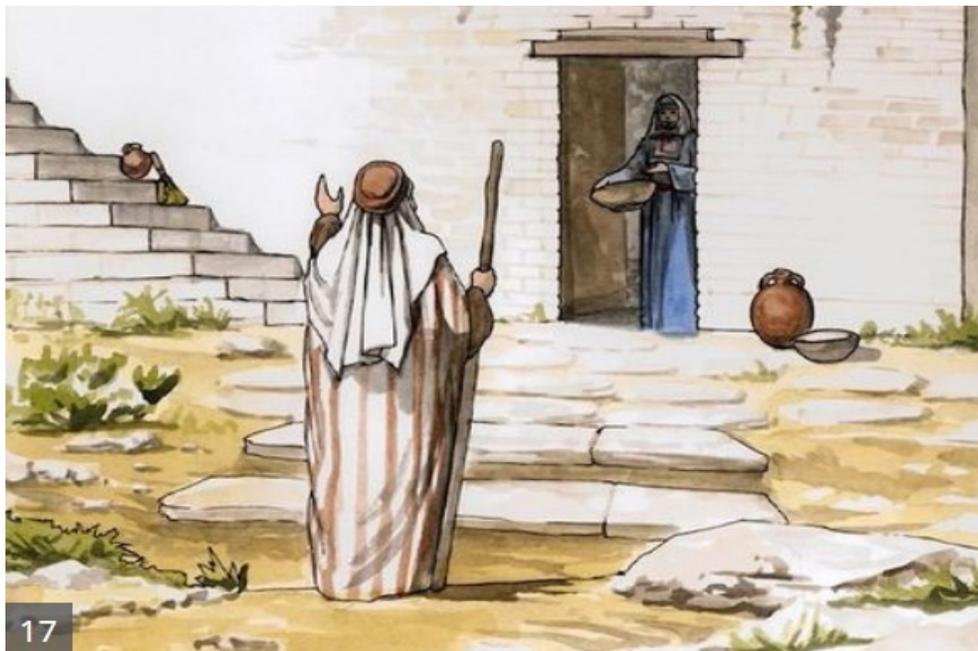
21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple.

(The people waiting outside are wondering what is taking Zacharias so long.)



22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

(When he couldn't speak, the people figured out that Zacharias had seen a vision. He could communicate only by making gestures with his hands.)



23 So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.

(After Zacharias finished serving in the temple, he went back home.)



24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

(Just as the angel had said, Elizabeth became pregnant. She and Zacharias must have been so excited! In the culture of that day, women felt ashamed when they were unable to have children. Now, their prayers have finally been answered.)

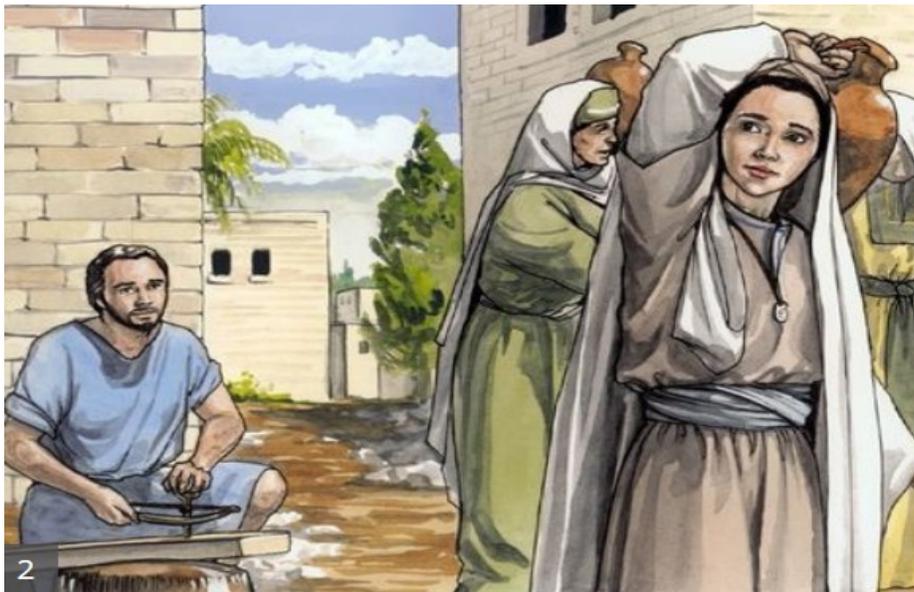
Today, we sometimes become impatient when we ask God for things, and we don't get an immediate answer. We don't like to wait. But God always answers our prayers. Sometimes He says, "Yes." Sometimes He says, "No." And sometimes, as with Zacharias and Elizabeth, He says, "You will have to wait." But whatever His answer, God always knows what is best for us.

The next part of our lesson happens about six months later...

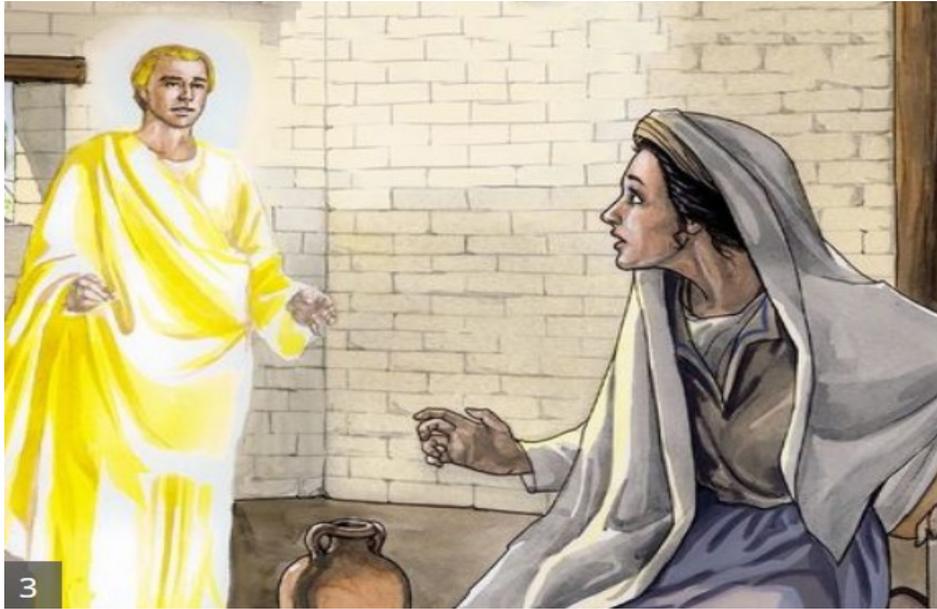
Quarter 1 Lesson 1
C. An Angel Appears to Mary
Luke 1:26-38



"26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth...
(The "sixth month" refers to six months after Gabriel appeared to Zacharias, and Elizabeth became pregnant.)



27...to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.
(Betrothed means that Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married.)



28 And having come in, the angel said to her, 'Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!' 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

(Think about what Gabriel has just told Mary. She has been "highly favored" by God--blessed among women. Of course, Mary was confused! It is not every day that an angel appears to a poor Jewish girl!)



30 Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.'



31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.
(Mary is going to have a baby boy and His name will be Jesus.)



32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.'
(Mary is going to give birth to the Son of God! He will reign over a kingdom which will have no end!)



34 Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I do not know a man?'
35 And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you;...
(Mary doesn't understand. How can she have a baby when she is not yet married? But Gabriel explains that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and the power of God with *overshadow* her.)



...therefore, also that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible.'
(Out of all the Jewish women who had ever lived, Mary was the one chosen to be the mother of God's Son. Gabriel also tells Mary about her relative, Elizabeth, who is expecting a son in her old age.)



38 Then *Mary said, 'Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.'* And the angel departed from her."

(Think about Mary's response to the angel. She could have said, "Oh, no. Find somebody else. I'm just a very poor young girl. How would I take care of a child? I don't want the responsibility of bringing up the Son of God." Mary could have refused, but she didn't. She said, "Let it be to me according to your word." Or course, God already knew the heart of Mary. He knew that she was the special kind of person He wanted to be the mother of His Son. Was she perfect? No. Only Jesus lived a perfect life. But Mary was ready to accept the will of God, even if she didn't understand how His plan would play out in her life.)

Today, are we always willing to follow God's will in our lives, or do we make excuses? Just as God knew Mary's heart, He knows our hearts. Just as God knew the kind of person Mary was, He knows the kind of persons we are. Notice that Gabriel didn't ask Mary to accept this awesome responsibility, he told her. Just as God expected Mary to follow His command, He expects us to follow His commandments.

As we continue in our lesson, we want to take a look at what Mary did next.

Quarter 1 Lesson 1
D. Mary Visits Elizabeth and the Birth of John
Luke 1:39-48, 56-66



"39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. (When Mary heard the good news about her relative Elizabeth being pregnant, she went to visit her.)



*41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and **Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.** 42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!...*

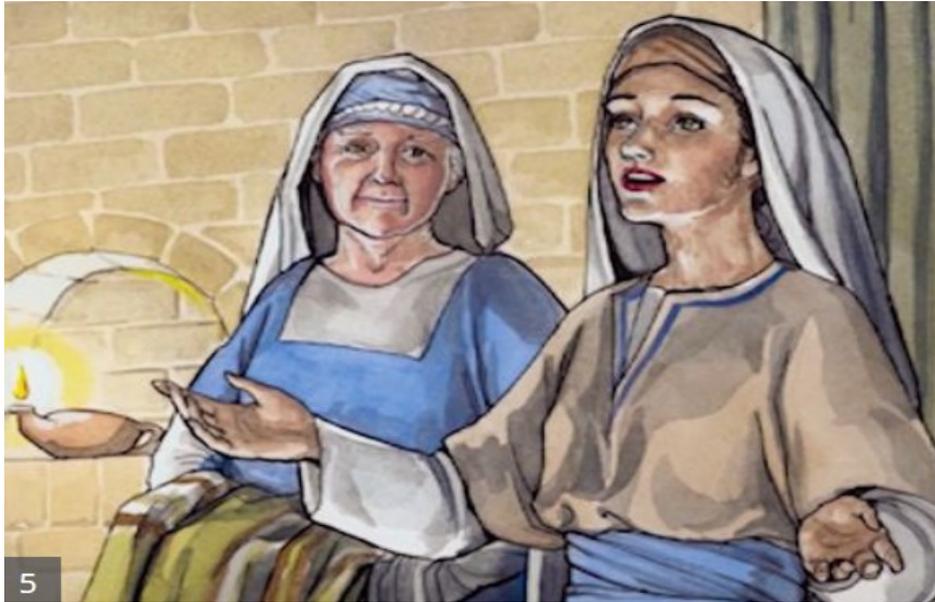


43 But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.' (Upon Mary's greeting, Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She knew immediately that Mary had been chosen to be the mother of the long-awaited Messiah.)

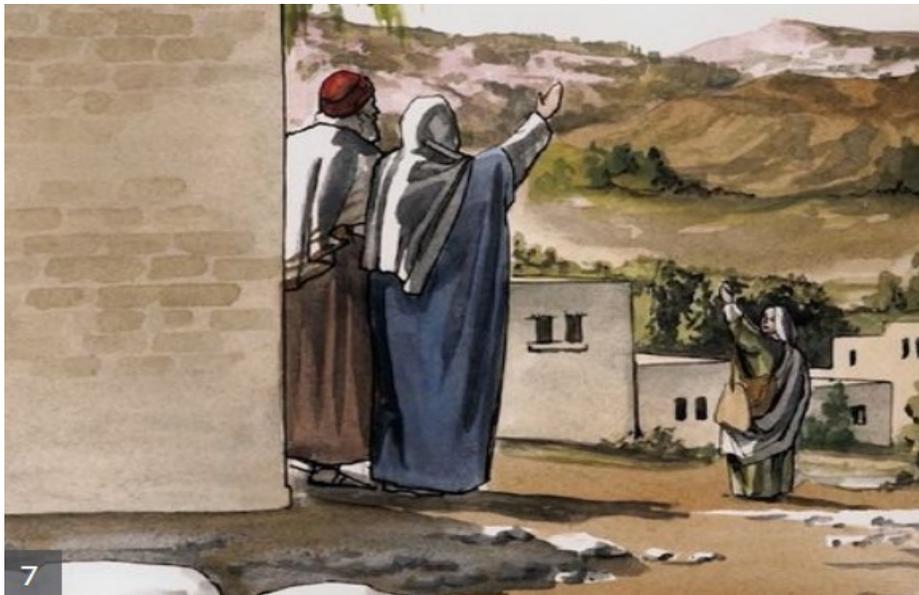


46 And Mary said: 'My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.'

(What a wonderful visit these two special ladies must have had as they each shared their stories with one another! Notice that Mary is rejoicing!)



*48 For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth **all generations will call me blessed.**'*
(Mary understood the special honor she had been given.)



*56 And **Mary remained with her about three months,** and returned to her house.*
(Mary visited with Elizabeth for about three months before returning home. When she left, it was nearing the time when Elizabeth's son would be born. It seems that Mary left before his birth occurred.)



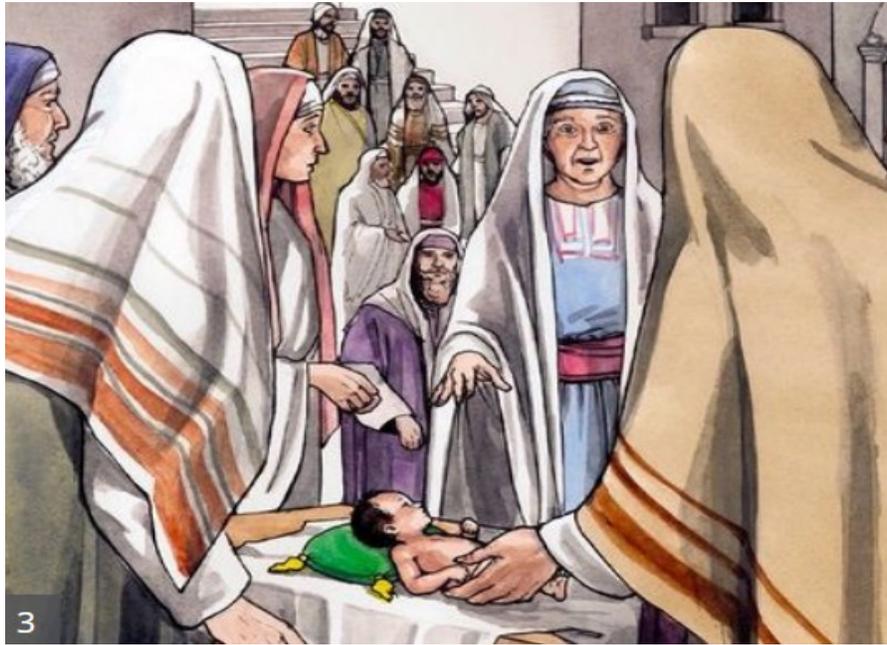
57 Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered and she brought forth a son. 58 When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

(When the time came for the baby to be born, the family and friends all wanted to come see him. How they rejoiced that God had finally blessed Zacharias and Elizabeth with a child!)



59 So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

(According to tradition, ten people were to witness the circumcision, a rite which was required by Jewish law. These friends and relatives wanted to name the baby Zacharias, after his father--kind of like Zacharias Junior.)



60 His mother answered and said, 'No, he shall be called John.' 61 But they said to her, 'There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name.' (When Elizabeth said his name was to be John, the relatives didn't understand why since they had no other Johns in the family.)



62 So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called. (Remember, Zacharias still couldn't speak, so he had not had an active part in this conversation. They asked him what he wanted to name the baby.)



63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, 'His name is John.' So they all marveled.

(Evidently, these folks didn't expect Zacharias to agree with Elizabeth. However, these parents were not the ones who decided on their son's name--God did that!)



64 Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.

(Now, after all these months, Zacharias could talk again! And what did he say? He praised God!)



*65 Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. 66 And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, 'What kind of child will this be?' And **the hand of the Lord was with him.**"*

(Today when "news" happens, folks talk about it. The people who lived 2000 years ago were no different. Throughout the whole area, people were talking about the birth of a special child born to the old couple, Zacharias and Elizabeth. No doubt, they discussed how Zacharias had seen an angel and was stricken mute while serving in the temple. They marveled when he suddenly was able to speak again after proclaiming the child would be named John. They wondered what this child would grow up to be.

Unlike these friends and relatives, we know the rest of the story. We know that this young boy grew up to become a great preacher who taught people to repent and turn back to God. We know that he was the one who prepared the way for the coming of the Messiah. We call him John the Baptist.